

# POTATO CREEK STATE PARK

25601 State Road 4 • P.O. 908 • North Liberty, Indiana 46554  
 (574) 656-8186 3,840 acres Established 1969

Redwood Road

New Road

Oak Road

| PICNIC SHELTER AREAS |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
|                      | Quaking Aspen                |
|                      | Tulip Poplar Rec Building    |
|                      | Whispering Winds East        |
|                      | Whispering Winds West        |
|                      | Orchard Shores West          |
|                      | Orchard Shores East          |
|                      | Peppermint Hill Rec Building |

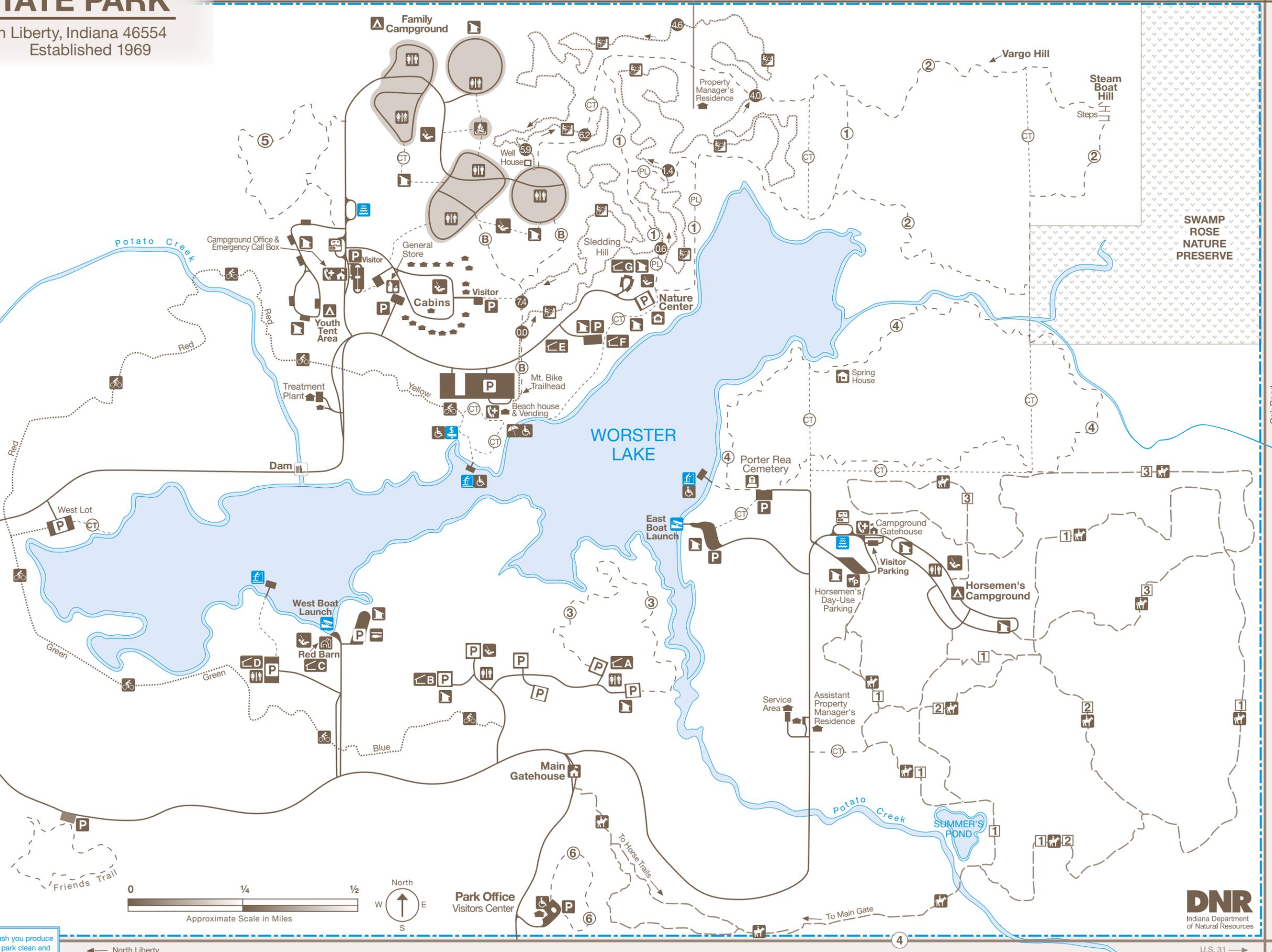
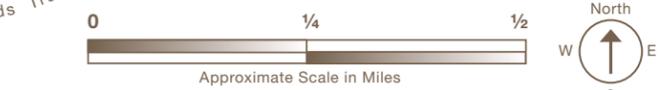
| TRAIL TABLE |         |              |
|-------------|---------|--------------|
| TRAIL       | MILEAGE | TRAIL TYPE   |
| ①           | 2.2     | Moderate     |
| ②           | 2       | Rugged       |
| ③           | 1       | Moderate     |
| ④           | 2.5     | Moderate     |
| ⑤           | 1       | Easy         |
| ⑥           | .5      | Easy         |
| Friends     | .75     | Easy         |
| B           | .5      | Easy         |
| ①           | 3.35    | Bridle Trail |
| ②           | 1.5     | Bridle Trail |
| ③           | 2.5     | Bridle Trail |
| Bicycle     | 3.3     | Moderate     |
| Mt. Bike    | 7.4     | Easy         |
| CT          | 2.8     | Easy         |
| PL          | .9      | Easy         |

\* All restrooms and comfort stations are accessible

| LEGEND |                    |  |                    |
|--------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
|        | Boundary           |  | Accessible         |
|        | Road               |  | Campground         |
|        | Hiking Trail       |  | Playground         |
|        | Paved Bike Trail   |  | General Store      |
|        | Horse Trail        |  | Shelter            |
|        | Mt. Bike Trail     |  | Vault Toilet       |
|        | Nature Preserve    |  | Emergency Call Box |
|        | Mileage Marker     |  | Dumping Station    |
|        | Connectors         |  | Beach              |
|        | Peppermint Loop    |  | Fishing Pier       |
|        | Parking            |  | Boat Rental        |
|        | Restroom           |  | Water Fill Station |
|        | Fish Cleaning Stn. |  | Campfire Circle    |

**RECYCLE**  
 Place used beverage cans in the park's marked recycling containers. Thank you.

**CARRY IN CARRY OUT**  
 Please carry out all trash you produce in order to keep your park clean and beautiful for others to enjoy.



SWAMP ROSE NATURE PRESERVE

**DNR**  
 Indiana Department of Natural Resources

U.S. 31  
 4 miles

05/2024

Creek offers, visitors will find a variety of natural areas. Most were drastically altered by decades of farming and other land uses before the area became a park.

In the early 1990s an active resource management program started at Potato Creek. The program's ongoing efforts seek to restore and maintain some of the park's natural areas, such as its natural wetlands. The goal is to re-create conditions resembling those of the presettlement days of the early 1800s.

Several areas are being restored to provide valuable habitat for a variety of plants and wildlife. The wetland types include saturated soil sedge meadows, shallow marshes, swamps and beaver ponds. Today, more than a square mile of the park is covered by wetlands and Worster Lake. These areas abound in wildlife, especially during spring and fall bird migrations.

Native prairie also is being returned to the Potato Creek landscape through plantings. The prairie areas will be maintained by periodic controlled burning. These meadows put on a colorful late summer flower and grass display.

Other areas of the park are being allowed to grow into hardwood forests. Among the highlights of the forests are the spring wildflower displays and a variety of wildlife, including songbirds, raccoon, fox, coyote and turkey.

Swamp Rose Nature Preserve, located in the northeast section, offers a look at the eutrophic process. This means that a lake has slowly, over hundreds of years, become a wetland. A scenic small stream originates in this wetland and flows into Worster Lake. The nature preserve also has several unusual plants and is a favored location for beavers.

This blend of wetlands, prairies and forests reflects what was recorded as being here before the first European settlers arrived in the 1830s. Because of the rich variety of natural habitats, Potato Creek was named as an Important Bird Area (IBA) in 2006. This international designation is bestowed on areas critical to birds during some part of their life cycle.

Potato Creek's varied natural communities also provide homes for a wide array of other wildlife and plants for today's park visitors and for future generations to enjoy.

## DNR PROPERTIES NEARBY

For a full list/map of all DNR properties visit [on.IN.gov/recguide](http://on.IN.gov/recguide) or [on.IN.gov/recfinder](http://on.IN.gov/recfinder).

### Kingsbury Fish & Wildlife Area

archery, boat ramps, dog training areas, fishing, hunting, target ranges, trapping, wildlife watching

### Chamberlain Lake Nature Preserve

bird observation platform, hiking trail

## ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

**BICYCLING**—There is both a 3.3-mile paved trail with some hilly and curvy stretches and a 7.4-mile beginner-level mountain bike trail. Standard bicycle rentals are available, or visitors may bring their own bicycle. Helmets recommended on mountain bike trail.

**BOATS, CANOES, & KAYAK RENTAL**—Daily or hourly rental. Boat rental is accessible. Hours vary—please call.

**BOAT LAUNCH**—Only Private boats or sailboats may be launched. Electric trolling motors, powered by no more than two 12-volt batteries, or hand propulsion, is allowed. Mooring area available for a nominal fee.

**CAMPING**—Tent and trailer sites available. Campground is equipped with flush toilets, hot water, showers, electricity, a dump station and water-filling station. No water or sewage hookups. Occupancy limited to 14 consecutive nights. Sites accommodate six people. A horsemen's campground is available—all campers must have horses, and all horses must have tags. Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

**CAMP STORE**—Open May through October. Hours vary—please call.

**CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING**—More than 8 miles of trails when snow-covered. Tubing, sledding and ice fishing are also available. Equipment is not provided.

**FAMILY CABINS**—Open year-round. Cabins accommodate eight people. There are two bedrooms, bath, kitchen with pots/pans, dining area and screened porch. Cabins are rented Saturday to Saturday, mid-June through mid-August. Two consecutive-night rentals can be made 30 days in advance if available. Friday and Saturday or Saturday and Sunday nights must be rented together the rest of the year. Occupancy limited to 14 consecutive nights. **No pets allowed.** Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

**FISHING**—Bass, bluegill, etc. State license required; 14-inch minimum largemouth bass limit.

**HORSE TRAILS**—Trails begin at horsemen's campground. Horses permitted only on bridle trails. No rentals available.

**INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICE**—Enjoy natural resource interpretive and recreational programs. Program schedules available at [InterpretiveServices.IN.gov](http://InterpretiveServices.IN.gov) or (574) 656-8186.

**PICNIC AREAS**—Tables, grills, restrooms, playground, playfields, and shelters with electricity. Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

**SWIMMING**—Free beach with accessible area. Beach and beach house open Saturday before Memorial Day and no later than Labor Day. Conditions may require beach closing before Labor Day.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Do not injure or damage any structure, rock, tree, flower, bird or wild animal. Do NOT gather limbs, brush or trees (either dead or alive) for firewood because they rebuild the natural humus.
- Any firearm (except lawfully possessed handguns), BB gun, air gun, CO<sub>2</sub> gun, bow and arrow, paint gun or spear gun in possession in a state park must be unloaded or un-nocked and stored in a case or locked within a vehicle, except when owner is participating in an activity authorized by written permit.
- Dogs and cats must be attended at all times and kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet.
- Vending or advertising without permission of the Department of Natural Resources is prohibited.
- Camping is permitted only in the campground. No youth groups permitted in the family campground.
- Fires shall be built only in designated places.
- Please comply with the Carry In/Carry Out trash policy in all day-use areas. Overnight guests shall put waste in receptacles provided for that purpose.
- Motorists shall observe posted speed limits, and park only in designated areas, not on grass.
- Swimming is limited to places and times designated by the Department of Natural Resources.
- Drinking water should be taken only from pumps, hydrants or fountains provided for that purpose. This water is tested regularly for purity.
- Report lost or found articles to the park office.
- All motorized vehicles shall remain on paved roadway. Do not park on grass. Snowmobiles are prohibited.
- Metal detectors are allowed on main beach between Labor Day and Memorial Day with written permission from the property manager.
- Park is closed from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. No one is allowed in the park, except campers and cabin guests using their sites between these hours.

For a complete list of rules and regulations, visit the property office or go online at:

[on.IN.gov/INStateParksRules](http://on.IN.gov/INStateParksRules)

## DESCRIPTION OF HIKING TRAILS

| TRAIL & DESCRIPTION  | DISTANCE  | DIFFICULTY |
|--|-----------|------------|
| <b>Trail 1</b><br>Skirts Worster Lake, passing through old fields and maple and oak-hickory forest. Returns to Nature Center area.   | 2.2 miles | Moderate   |
| <b>Trail 2</b><br>Accessed either from Trail 1 or Trail 4. Winds through woods, up and down hills, to highest point in park.   | 2 mile    | Rugged     |
| <b>Trail 3</b><br>Travels along ridge overlooking Worster Lake, passing through beech-maple forest and down to lake observation deck.  | 1 miles   | Moderate   |
| <b>Trail 4</b><br>Scenic path along stream through beech-maple woods, past the lake and old farm sites.  | 2.5 miles | Moderate   |
| <b>Trail 5</b><br>Rolling trail cuts through old fields. Has small wetland observation deck.   | 1 miles   | Easy       |
| <b>Trail 6</b><br>Short loop passes wetland and woods.   | .5 miles  | Moderate   |
| <b>Friends Wetland Trail</b><br>Passes three wetland observation decks.  | .75 miles | Easy       |
| <b>Peppermint Loop Trail</b><br>Starts at Nature Center following Trail 1 on old Peppermint Road along the lake. Cuts through a young woods and rejoins the end of Trail 1.  | .9 mile   | Easy       |
| <b>Paved Bicycle Trail</b><br>Trail starts at boat rental and ends near Tulip Poplar shelter. It winds up and down wooded hills, above the creek bed, and then onto flat land passing wetlands and through forests.  | 3.3 miles | Moderate   |
| <b>Mountain Bike Trail</b><br>Developed through a partnership between the Northern Indiana Mountain Bike Association and Potato Creek State Park. For increased safety, bikers should ride in the direction indicated and hikers should walk in the opposite direction. Helmets recommended. | 7.4 miles | Easy       |

## PLEASE STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.

For a full list of events, visit [interpretiveservices.IN.gov](http://interpretiveservices.IN.gov)

## CENTRAL RESERVATION SYSTEM



Reservations for all types of camping, family cabins, and shelters at state parks, reservoirs and forests can be made online or by calling toll-free.  
Call: **1-866-6campIN** (1-866-622-6746)  
Online: [camp.IN.gov](http://camp.IN.gov)

Reservations for the Indiana State Park Inns and Inn-operated cabins can be made online or by phone.  
Call: **1-877-lodges1** (1-877-563-4371)  
Online: [IndianalInns.com](http://IndianalInns.com)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



Write: Potato Creek State Park  
25601 State Road 4  
P.O. Box 908  
North Liberty, IN 46554

Call: (574) 656-8186  
Online: [on.IN.gov/potatocreeksp](http://on.IN.gov/potatocreeksp)

## BECOME A PARK VOLUNTEER

If you would like to help support and enhance Potato Creek's facilities and programs, join the Friends of Potato Creek. For more information, see [InterpretiveServices.IN.gov](http://InterpretiveServices.IN.gov).



Please carry out all trash you produce in order to keep your park clean and beautiful for others to enjoy!

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See everything Indiana State Parks has to offer at [stateparks.IN.gov](http://stateparks.IN.gov).

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## DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

INDIANA

POTATO CREEK STATE PARK



on.IN.gov/stateparks

Native Americans once collected plants with potato-like roots on this area's creek banks. The early settlers' English translation for the name those people gave that plant was "wild potato," hence the name "Potato" Creek.

Darcey Worster and fellow conservation club members first proposed a man-made reservoir on Potato Creek in the late 1930s. Their project was halted by World War II. Worster kept that dream alive by sending his hand-crafted insects to state officials to "bug" them about creating a park. His efforts succeeded when the area was designated to become a park in 1969.

Potato Creek State Park, 3 miles east of North Liberty on State Road 4, became a reality on June 6, 1977, when the 6-square-mile (3,840-acre) area was formally dedicated. The park's 327-acre Worster Lake is named for Potato Creek's clever early supporter. In addition to the many recreational facilities that Potato